

Food Safety Institute
of the
Americas



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INTRODUCTION

The Food Safety Institute of the Americas (FSIA) was established in 2004 to address the critical issues of food safety information, training and policy harmonization within the countries of the Western Hemisphere. Its mission is to facilitate the dissemination of science-based food safety knowledge and education, focusing on all stages of food production and handling from the farm to the consumer.

As part of the FSIA Strategic Plan development process, it was decided to seek out information on food safety training from the individual countries including the extent and availability and modes of delivery, and to identify any impediments to the delivery of such training. To this end a Survey Questionnaire was developed by the University of Florida and Miami Dade College with input from representatives of a number of Western Hemisphere countries and FSIA. The questionnaire was prepared in English and translated into Spanish, Portuguese and French.

In March 2005, the questionnaire was sent to the Ministries of Health and Agriculture of 43 individual countries or territories of the Americas. Within some destination countries, it was further distributed for information and completion.

Completed returns have been received from 14 of the 43 (32.5%) countries and territories surveyed. With multiple returns from some countries, a total of 29 completed returns have been received (67.5% of questionnaires sent out).

Completed questionnaire returns have been evaluated, question by question, on a regional basis (Central America, Caribbean and South America). Common themes have been reported from a number of countries, such as the need for development of or updating of existing food safety legislation, the need to identify respective roles and responsibilities of individual government agencies and the general lack of awareness and importance of Food Safety principles at all stages of the food chain. Other specific needs and issues were highlighted by individual countries.

The information provided has formed the basis on which the FSIA Strategic Plan has been developed.

Thanks and acknowledgements are extended to those people, institutions and countries that contributed to the development of the questionnaire and most importantly to those who took the time and effort to respond to it. Their efforts and intellectual input are greatly appreciated and are invaluable to the development and progress of the FSIA and its goals.

Summary report of the Food Safety Institute of the Americas: Needs Survey

Introduction

A survey questionnaire was developed by the University of Florida and Miami Dade College with input from representatives of a number of Western Hemisphere countries and FSIA. The purpose of the questionnaire and survey was to seek information on Food Safety training throughout the countries of the Americas, including the extent and availability, modes of delivery and to identify any impediments to the delivery of such training. The questionnaire was prepared in English and translated into Spanish, Portuguese and French.

In March 2005, the questionnaire was sent to the Ministries of Health and Agriculture of the majority of countries and territories of the Americas. The United States was not included in the survey. The questionnaire was sent to a total of 43 individual countries or territories. Within some destinations the questionnaire was further distributed for information and completion.

Completed returns have been received, to date, from Mexico (2), Honduras (9), Costa Rica (2), Panama (2), Trinidad and Tobago (2), Netherlands Antilles (2), Guyana, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts (2), Venezuela (2), Argentina, Colombia, Chile and Ecuador.

Completed returns have therefore been received from 14 of the 43 countries and territories surveyed (32.5%). With multiple returns from some countries, a total of 29 completed returns have been received (67.5% of questionnaires sent out).

Completed questionnaire returns were evaluated initially, question by question, on a Regional basis (North America, Central America, Caribbean and South America). From the regional returns an overall report and assessment of the status and needs of Food Safety training has been made.

Findings

Education, Training and Information Needs

There tended to be a lot of consistency in the list of identified Food Safety issues and needs throughout the countries of the Americas.

The need for development or up-dating of existing Food Safety legislation in Central and South American and the Caribbean regions was consistently reported. Also widely reported in these regions was the need to better identify and coordinate respective roles and responsibilities of individual Government agencies involved in Food Safety.

Countries consistently reported on the lack of awareness and importance of Food Safety principles and issues at all stages of the food chain.

The need for better monitoring and surveillance systems was highlighted by a number of countries, in order to more objectively define the extent of Food Safety problems, quantify their impact and assist with management. It appears, in a large number of countries, that programs to address Food Safety issues are only put in place in response to a particular Food Safety concern or issue. A more proactive approach to Food Safety awareness, training and management programs is clearly called for.

There were mixed reports of availability of training courses. It was identified that the opportunity to attend or take existing courses needs to be strengthened in some countries. Courses need to be developed, to address those sectors of the Food Chain, for which presently no courses are available.

There was widespread confirmation of the extent and usefulness of information available from International and Regional organizations. There were conflicting reports of the usefulness of available material from National and State based agencies and from academic and research organizations. There were widespread reports that Food Safety information and educational material available in schools was not useful.

It was consistently claimed that Food Safety training is impeded because of the absence of clear national Food Safety policies and strategies and by poor coordination between Government agencies. Present curricula need to be strengthened to cover those sectors of the Food Chain which presently have no training available to them. It was generally reported that a greater investment in human capital and course content is urgently needed. A few countries reported difficulties or limitations of training delivery due to local cultural, language and geographical isolation issues.

Collaborations and Partnership Development

Despite some conflicting reports the majority of countries reported that they utilize a number of Governmental, Non-Governmental Organizations, academic institutions, industry and private consultants in their respective countries in the provision of Food Safety information and education. Countries in all Regions confirmed that their consumers receive Food Safety information from a number of non Governmental sources.

Strategies and Best Practices for Developing and Delivering Food Safety Programs

Countries in all Regions unanimously reported on the extent and effectiveness of Food Safety and animal and plant health programs in their respective countries. These ranged from national disease eradication or prevention e.g. Foot and Mouth disease and BSE, a FAO project to improve fruits and vegetable quality, GMP for producers, processors, the retail sector and consumers and training for hospitality workers. These programs were delivered by a number of National and International or Regional agencies.

The majority of countries in all Regions reported positively on the effectiveness of Train the Trainer, hands-on training and applied technology based training.

It was generally reported that the most effective motivational force for the acceptance and adoption of Food Safety information and training was through the promotion and realization that Food Safety practices resulted in tangible dividends at all sectors of the Food Chain. These dividends were reported as increased market opportunity - both national and international -, minimizing failure costs, adding value to the products, improved worker self esteem and improved public health, etc..

Most countries reported on the wide availability of modern communication technologies to deliver Food Safety training. However South American responses indicated some geographic limitations of availability of technical equipment.

General Questions

The remaining items on the Questionnaire focused on contact details of responders and contact details for responsible officials on Food Safety issues within respective countries.

Summary List of Identified Food Safety Issues:

- 1. Develop or update legislation.**
- 2. Identify and coordinate government agencies.**
- 3. Develop National Food Safety policy.**
- 4. Lack of awareness and importance of Food Safety.**
- 5. Improve monitoring and surveillance systems.**
- 6. Need for proactive Food Safety strategies.**
- 7. Increase availability of training courses.**
- 8. Develop curricula to cover all sectors of the Food Chain.**
- 9. Improve available information and educational material.**
- 10. Address issues of cultural, language and geographical limitations.**
- 11. Continue and strengthen Collaboration and Partnership development.**
- 12. Build on success of existing Food Safety and animal and plant programs.**
- 13. Adopt and further develop successful training delivery methods.**
- 14. Promote positive aspects of Food Safety as a motivational tool.**
- 15. Promote access to training technical equipment and technologies.**

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SPREADSHEET OF SURVEY RESULTS

I. Education, Training and Information Needs

<u>QUESTION</u>	<u>CENTRAL AMERICA</u>	<u>CARIBBEAN</u>	<u>SOUTH AMERICA</u>
1.Are there any critical food safety issues related to public health ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The overall lack of awareness of importance of food safety as an issue at all stages of the food chain. -The absence of or presence of outdated or inadequate food safety legislation. -Poor governmental agency definition of roles and responsibilities and poor intra-agency coordination. -The absence of or poor development of food safety standards. -Insufficient food safety research. -The need for better surveillance and monitoring of food borne diseases. -The need for more industry infrastructure and investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The need for updated food safety legislation. - The need for better communication of food safety information. - The poor application of GMPs' in food production and preparation particularly health checks and personal hygiene on food preparation handlers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The lack of government agency agreement on roles and responsibilities and poor inter-agency coordination. - The general lack of knowledge about food safety issues and their management throughout the entire food chain including the medical profession. - The need for a better monitoring system for food borne illness. - The need for better application of Risk Assessment and Risk Management approaches to food safety. - The need for updated food safety legislation.
2. Are there any food safety and food protection educational and training courses/programs activities available within your country ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generally training is available and provided by Government, academic/research institutions and some private consultants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are reports of some training generally available and provided by Governments, academic institutions, industry and international organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are reports of availability and delivery of food safety training by Governments, academic institutions and international organizations.

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<u>QUESTIONS</u>	<u>CENTRAL AMERICA</u>	<u>CARIBBEAN</u>	<u>SOUTH AMERICA</u>
2. Are there any food safety and food protection educational and training courses/programs activities available within your country ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some countries reported that training has been provided by some international organizations. - But a generally shared comment is that training is not coordinated and is not available on an on-going basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A general comment is that there is a lack of in-depth formal food safety training available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - But a generally shared comment is that existing courses tend to be short training courses with a minimum of overall coordination and follow up. A lack of availability of in-depth courses is reported.
3. How useful were the available materials in meeting your country's food safety education and training needs ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -All countries report that the training material available from the international organizations generally is very useful. - Generally, countries reported that the material from national and state agencies is helpful but not of the same quality and availability as that from the international organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Countries generally report that the food safety training information from the international and regional organizations is very useful. - There are mixed reports of the usefulness of information from other sources e.g. national and state agencies, industry, academic and training institutions, varying from very useful to inadequate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food safety training information available from international and regional organizations is reported to be very useful. - There are reports of mixed or limited value of material available from national governments and state agencies. - There are reports of mixed value of material available from universities, while material currently available in schools is reported to be inadequate.

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<u>QUESTION</u>	<u>CENTRAL AMERICA</u>	<u>CARIBBEAN</u>	<u>SOUTH AMERICA</u>
4. For existing food safety education and training courses/programs/activities in your country of which you are aware please indicate the availability/ unavailability of them to potential target audiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some countries reported that a range of training courses is available to most sectors of the food chain with the exception of the food handlers. - One country reported it had a lack of available training for industry workers and consumers and another reported on the need for training availability for health care workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are generally good reports of training courses available to all sectors of the food chain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are general reports of good availability of training courses at the producer, processor, governmental official and university level. - But it is reported that training is poorly available or non existent to consumers and street vendors.

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<u>QUESTION</u>	<u>CENTRAL AMERICA</u>	<u>CARIBBEAN</u>	<u>SOUTH AMERICA</u>
5. In additions of the limitation of funding, are there other limitations to producing and effectively delivering food safety educational and training materials to intended audiences within your country.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consistent limitations reported from all countries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- lack of research, -- individual needs of the various sectors of the food chain not identified, -- lack of sufficient human resources, -- lack of clearly defined responsible government agency and bureaucratic inefficiencies, -- lack of clear national policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fragmented control between government agencies. - Poor skills and expertise in course development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of consistent or continuous approach to training reported. - Lack of national policy. - Lack of sufficient human resources.
6. What, if any, obstacles may be encountered at the local level in delivering effective food safety education and training within your country ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A general lack of public and consumer awareness of food safety issues. - Lack of a clear national food safety strategy. - Lack of sufficient human resources. - Lack of available training material. - Lack of financial investment. - Some countries reported language and cultural difficulties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A general lack of a coordinated approach within individual countries is reported. - A poor level of literacy is identified as an impediment to food safety awareness and training. - Some cultural practices are reported as causing problems to food safety awareness and training. These are not specified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General reports of a lack of government coordination on food safety issues. - Also a lack of national strategies to proactively address food safety training. - There are reports of current foods safety issues only being addressed on a reactive basis. - Some problems have been reported in the delivery of food safety programs due to diverse ethnic groups and geographic locations.

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<u>QUESTIONS</u>	<u>CENTRAL AMERICA</u>	<u>CARIBBEAN</u>	<u>SOUTH AMERICA</u>
7. Have any surveys or assessments been conducted within your country to determine the general food safety knowledge of consumers, producers, processors, handlers, etc ?	- A number of countries reported on some surveys having been conducted without ready availability of results.	- One country reported on an industry survey being conducted.	- Countries reported that they were unaware of any food safety surveys had been conducted.
8. Does your government utilize collaborative relationships, partnerships and/or networks to provide food safety information to industry and consumers ?	- Yes (9) - No (2) - Don't Know (2)	- Yes (4) - No (1)	- Yes(1) - No (2) - Don't Know (1)

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II. Collaborations and Partnership Development

<u>QUESTIONS</u>	<u>CENTRAL AMERICA</u>	<u>CARIBBEAN</u>	<u>SOUTH AMERICA</u>
9. Are there institutions, organizations or authorities other than the government that consumers within your country rely on to obtain food safety information ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes (9) - No (4) - Don't know (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes (5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes (4) - No (1)

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<u>QUESTIONS</u>	<u>CENTRAL AMERICA</u>	<u>CARIBBEAN</u>	<u>SOUTH AMERICA</u>
10. Are there other governmental authorities that the national government utilizes to deliver food safety education and training ?	- Yes (7) No (3) - Don't Know (4)	- Yes (3) - No (2)	- Yes (5)
11. Are your country's universities/academic networks utilized in delivering food safety education and training programs to producers, processors, distributors, transporters and retailers of food ?	- Yes (5) - No (5) - Don't Know (4)	- Yes (2) - No (3)	- Yes (2) - No (3)

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III. Strategies and Best Practices for Developing and Delivering Food Safety Programs

<u>QUESTIONS</u>	<u>CENTRAL AMERICA</u>	<u>CARIBBEAN</u>	<u>SOUTH AMERICA</u>
12. Have any current or past food safety or other plant protection/animal health activities initiated in your country been effective in reaching intended audiences?	- Yes (13) - Don't Know (1)	- Yes (5)	- Yes (5)
13. What techniques were effective in the delivery of the activities identified in question 12	- Train the Trainer (6) - Technology based (2) - Hands on Training (7) - Self Paced (3)	- Train the Trainer (4) - Technology Based (2) - Self-Paced - Hands on Training (5) - Other – Public awareness Seminars, - Integrated Pest Management, Apprenticeship, Farmer Participator Approaches	- Train the Trainer (4) - Technology Based (2) - Self Paced - Hands on Training (5) - Other

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<u>QUESTIONS</u>	<u>CENTRAL AMERICA</u>	<u>CARIBBEAN</u>	<u>SOUTH AMERICA</u>
14. How would you encourage/motivate target audiences to participate in food safety education and training activities ?	<p>Producers – There will be more product acceptance at the international level. Inform them that new regulations and accreditation are going to be developed. New market opportunities. Avoid financial losses. Offer some kind of reward. Provide adequate training schedule/time.</p> <p>Processors – Provide certification and regulations. Increase export and import of products. To open new market venues. Avoid financial losses. Provide adequate training schedule/time.</p> <p>Transporters – Make them aware of the importance of their job in the food safety chain. Provide certifications and regulations. Their client will show more interest in their services.</p> <p>Distributors – Providing new market venues.</p> <p>Retailers – New market opportunities. Better quality products. More competition.</p> <p>Consumers – They will be able to identify the best products for their family and would know how to preserve them. Family health will be safe from that perspective. New knowledge.</p> <p>Government Staff – Provide</p>	<p>Producers – Provide incentives registration and certification.</p> <p>Processors – To show them financial benefits.</p> <p>Transporters – Provide registration and certification, financial benefits.</p> <p>Distributors – Public recognition, financial benefits</p> <p>Retailers – Public recognition, financial benefits</p> <p>Consumers – Awareness of how important is for consumer's health.</p> <p>Government Staff – Sponsored training. Awareness of how important it is for consumer's health.</p>	<p>Producers – To show them financial benefits. Explain them their importance in the food chain. Access to the market.</p> <p>Processors – Reputation and product recognition as safe by the consumers. Financial benefits. Better opportunities.</p> <p>Transporters – Make them aware of the importance of their job in the food chain. Provide financial benefits.</p> <p>Distributors – – Make them aware of the importance of their job in the food chain. Provide financial benefits. Added value to their product.</p> <p>Retailers – Will gain reputation and consumer's trust.</p> <p>Consumers – Gain knowledge, health benefits.</p> <p>Government Staff – As governmental officials, it is their responsibility to protect the consumer's health, therefore, they need to be knowledgeable in the area. To show them how they can benefit from this in their working activities. Opportunity for growth.</p>

	<p>scholarships. Provide adequate training schedule and case studies. Training program will provide the necessary resources for better job performance.</p>		
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<u>QUESTIONS</u>	<u>CENTRAL AMERICA</u>	<u>CARIBBEAN</u>	<u>SOUTH AMERICA</u>
15. Is any of the following technological infrastructure available at the local level to effectively deliver food safety educational training activities in your country ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multimedia – (10) - Web Access – (10) - Video Conference – (8) - Computers – (11) - TV- (11) <p>- Number of Responses: 13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multimedia – (2) - Web Access – (3) - Video Conference – (1) - Computers – (5) - TV- (5) <p>- Number of Responses: 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multimedia – (5) - Web Access – (5) - Video Conference – (5) - Computers – (5) - TV- (5) <p>- Number of Responses: (6) - Not all the institutions have all the equipment.</p>

Education, Training, and Informational Needs

1. For your country, are there any critical food safety¹ issues related to public health? If so please list them.
2. Are there any food safety and food protection educational and training courses/programs/activities available within your country?
 - a. If yes, which institutions/organizations such as Universities, government, professional associations are providing these courses/programs/activities?
3. How useful were the available materials in meeting your country's food safety education and training needs: *(place an "X" in the appropriate column for each material listed)*

	Very Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not Useful	No Opinion
International Organizations (WHO/FAO/ Codex, etc.)				
Regional Organizations (PAHO, IICA, OIRSA, CARDI, etc)				
National Government Agencies (Agriculture, Health)				
State/Provincial/Territorial Agencies <i>(please circle appropriate term)</i>				
Non-government organizations (industry, consumer, etc.)				
Universities				
Elementary through high school program				
Other, please specify:				

¹ Assurance that food will not cause harm to the consumer when it is prepared and/or eaten according to its intended use. (For the purpose of this survey, food safety includes both intentional and unintentional contamination of food).

4. For existing food safety education and training courses/programs/activities in your country of which you are aware, please indicate the availability/unavailability of them to potential target audiences: *(place an “X” in the appropriate column for each target audience)*

	Available	Not Available	Don't Know
Individual Consumers			
Government officials (e.g., inspectors)			
Health care professionals (doctors, nurses, care givers)			
Students (elementary through high school)			
Students (university level)			
Growers/producers of food (farmers)			
Processors (meat, poultry and egg products)			
Other processors			
Storage facilities/handlers of food (transporters, packers, warehouses, distributors, retail stores)			
Vendors of food (restaurant, street vendors)			

5. In addition to the limitation of funding, are there other limitations to producing and effectively delivering food safety educational and training materials to intended audiences within your country.

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

If yes, please identify these limitations and do you have any ideas as to how these limitations can be addressed.

6. What, if any, obstacles may be encountered at the local level in delivering effective food safety education and training within your country (e.g. sensitive cultural issues, local dialects or differences from the generally accepted and spoken language, coordination between health and agriculture ministries etc)?

7. Have any surveys or assessments been conducted within your country to determine the general food safety knowledge of consumers, producers, processors, handlers, etc?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

If yes, identify and if possible provide a brief description or a copy of the conclusions.

Collaborations and Partnership Development

8. Does your government utilize collaborative relationships, partnerships and/or networks to provide food safety information to industry and consumers (university/academic, government, non-government, corporate, etc)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

If yes, please list.

9. Are there institution(s), organizations or authorities other than the government that consumers within your country rely on to obtain food safety information?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

If yes, please identify these organizations/authorities.

10. Are there other governmental authorities (provincial, state, local, other political authorities) that the national government utilizes to deliver food safety education and training?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

If yes, please describe.

11. Are your country's universities/academic networks utilized in delivering food safety education and training programs to producers, processors, distributors, transporters and retailers of food?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

If yes, please describe.

Strategies and Best Practices for Developing and Delivering Food Safety Programs

12. Have any current or past food safety, or other public or plant protection/animal health activities initiated in your country been effective in reaching intended audiences?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't know

If yes, please describe.

13. What techniques were effective in the delivery of the activities identified in question 15 (check all that apply)?

_____ Train-the-trainer

_____ Technology based

_____ Self-paced

_____ Hands on training

_____ Other, please describe

14. How would you encourage/motivate target audiences to participate in food safety education and training activities?

Target audience	Encouragement/Motivation
Producers	
Processors	
Transporters	
Distributors	
Retailers	
Consumers	
Government employees	

15. Is any of the following technological infrastructure available at the local level to effectively deliver food safety educational/training activities in your country? *(place an "X" in the appropriate column for each technology listed)*

	Available	Not available	Don't Know
Multimedia equipment			
Web Access			
Video Conferences			
Computer			
Television			

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

16. Please identify yourself or organization/institution/agency responding to this survey.

17. Describe what role you or your organization/institution/agency has in the area of food safety and public health.

18. Is there a preferred single food safety contact within your country for FSIA to use?

If yes, please name it.

19. Currently is there a primary source (individual or organization) of food safety information in your country?

If yes, please name it.

We appreciate and thank you for your time and effort in responding to the survey.

Please submit the completed survey to:

MAIL ADDRESS: FSIA Survey Coordinator
Dr. Douglas L.Archer
Food Science and Human Nutrition Department
359 FSHN Building
PO Box 110370
Gainsville, FL 32611-0370

E-MAIL ADDRESS: FSIASurvey@ifas.ufl.edu

March 16, 2005

Mr. Minister of Health/Agriculture:

We would like to invite you to participate in an exciting and important initiative that will have a real impact on public health in the western hemisphere.

On October 13, 2004, the *United States Department of Agriculture* (USDA), *Food Safety and Inspection Service* (FSIS), established the ***Food Safety Institute of the Americas*** (FSIA). FSIA will be a forum for scientific discussion and dissemination of educational and training opportunities for governments, consumers and industry throughout the Americas, to improve the safety of meat, poultry and egg products.

It is envisioned that the FSIA will be an institute with a hemispheric identity, and will work to provide for the variety of different needs of the countries in the Americas and the Caribbean. This was recognized at the FSIA Inauguration on October 13, 2004, when Memoranda of Understanding were signed by representatives of each of the regions of the Americas pledging to work together on improving public health and food safety. The inauguration also formalized and provided additional structure to the work in which FSIS has been involved.

FSIA is seeking to tap into existing networks of universities and organizations within North, South and Central America and the Caribbean and has entered into cooperative agreements with the University of Florida and Miami Dade College to assist them in this endeavor. By using existing knowledge bases, FSIA believes it can place greater emphasis on developing materials to fill gaps in food safety education and information and enhance efforts to improve food safety education throughout the Americas.

An initial step in the identification process was the development of the attached survey. It has the goal of identifying the existing needs and gaps in education and training programs regarding food safety in the Americas. This survey is being administered by the FSIA partner schools, the University of Florida and Miami Dade College. The results of this survey are essential to FSIA in developing its strategic plan to assist all countries in the Americas by providing information about existing training and education activities that are already in place.

We are very grateful in advance to you for taking time to answer this survey and we ask you to do so as soon as possible. We estimate having all the surveys answered and submitted by
May 31, 2005.

For your convenience, this survey will also be available on the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences website at the following address: <http://research.ifas.ufl.edu> .Feel free to download the survey, answer the questions, and return the survey by e-mail to: FSIAsurvey@ifas.ufl.edu

If you have any clarification or question please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely
yours,

Dr. Doug Archer

Mr. Geoffrey Gathercole
FSIA Partner Schools

The image shows two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature, for Dr. Doug Archer, is a stylized cursive script. The second signature, for Mr. Geoffrey Gathercole, is also in cursive and appears to be written over a horizontal line. Both signatures are positioned to the right of their respective printed names.

FSIA Survey Country Coverage

<u>Canada</u>	<u>Caribbean</u>	<u>Central America</u>	<u>South America</u>
	Anguilla	Belize	Argentina
	Antigua and Barbuda	Costa Rica	Bolivia
	Aruba	Guatemala	Brazil
	The Bahamas	El Salvador	Chile
	Bassas da India	Honduras	Colombia
	Bermuda	Mexico	Ecuador
	British Virgin Islands	Nicaragua	Paraguay
	Cayman Islands	Panama	Peru
	Dominica		Uruguay
	Grenada		Venezuela
	Guadeloupe		Guyana
	Martinique		Suriname
	Montserrat		
	St. Kitts and Nevis		
	St. Lucia		
	St. Pierre and miquelon		
	St. Vincent and The Grenadines		
	Trinidad Tobago		
	Turks and Caicos Islands		
	Dominican Republic		
	Jamaica		
	Haiti		
Total : 1	Total : 22	Total : 8	Total : 12

Total of mailed surveys : 43

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Food Safety Institute of the Americas (FSIA) was established in 2004 to address the critical issues of food safety and public health information, training and policy harmonization within the countries of the Western Hemisphere. Its mission is to facilitate the dissemination of science-based food safety knowledge and education, focusing on all stages of food production and handling from the farm to the consumer.

As part of the FSIA Strategic Plan development process, it was decided to seek out information on food safety training from the individual countries including the extent and availability and modes of delivery, and to identify any impediments to the delivery of such training. In March 2005, the questionnaire was sent to the Ministries of Health and Agriculture of 43 individual countries and territories of the Western Hemisphere. Completed questionnaire returns have been evaluated, question by question, on a regional basis (Central America, Caribbean and South America).

Common themes have been reported from a number of countries and regions. These are:

- the need for development of or updating of existing food safety legislation,
- the need to identify respective roles and responsibilities of individual government agencies, and
- a general lack of awareness and importance of Food Safety principles at all stages of the food chain.

Other specific needs highlighted by some countries are:

- improved food safety monitoring and surveillance systems,
- more proactive programs to address Food Safety issues,
- improved availability of training courses,
- development of courses for those segments of the Food Chain for which currently no courses exist, and
- assistance to overcome some difficulties in training delivery due to local cultural, language and geographical isolation issues.

The information provided has formed the basis on which the FSIA Strategic Plan has been developed.